

Counseling and Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Rangwe Sub County of Homa Bay County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to ascertain the impact of counseling on the academic performance of Rangwe Sub-County students. The four objectives of this study were as follows: the role of counselors in promoting academic performance in public secondary schools, students' attitudes toward counseling in public secondary schools, the challenges facing counseling in public secondary schools, and the factors influencing students' academic performance in public secondary schools. Social learning and person-centered theory underpin this. The study's participants were 25,000 students from 21 secondary schools in the Rangwe Sub-County of Homa Bay County. The researcher intends to target all students as well as 21 teacher counselors. The sample size used was 394 people. The participants were chosen using simple random sampling. Participants were given questionnaires. To analyze quantitative data, descriptive and inferential statistics are used. The data was presented in the form of frequency graphs and verbatim responses. A pilot study was carried out to validate the instruments' veracity and dependability. Frequency means and percentages were used to analyze qualitative data. Tables with explanations were used to present the findings. The data was analyzed using (SPSS) version 21 by the researcher. The study established that counseling services in school enable students to share the problems they go through for psycho-social support and this helps in promoting their performance hence leading to good performance in public secondary schools. The study performed a correlation coefficient test to quantify the strength of the linear relationship between two study variables. Counseling services had the highest positive correlation with schools' academic performance ($r = 0.512$), the attitude of students towards counseling had the highest positive correlation with schools' academic performance ($r = 0.361$), challenges facing counseling had a positive correlation with schools' academic performance ($r = 0.387$), and other factors affecting counseling sessions had the lowest but positive correlation with schools' academic performance ($r = 0.341$). The study findings revealed that counseling services, the attitude of students towards counseling, challenges facing counseling, and other factors affecting counseling sessions correlate with school performance up to 45.9% ($R = 0.459$) and account for a variation of 21.1% ($R^2 = 0.211$). From the findings, this study recommends that to promote the behavior of students in seeking counseling services, there is a need for the schools to create awareness across the schools. Teachers should work towards building a good teacher-student relationship. This can help students to always open up and seek counseling services, School administration ought to work closely with the counseling teachers as well as students to identify and address all possible challenges that most cases hinder students from seeking counseling services while in school.

Keywords: Counseling; Academic Performance; Attitude; Pilot Study; Teacher-Student Relationship.

Introduction

Background of the Study

Globally there are several factors leading to poor performance of students in schools. If these factors are not dealt with, such students will continue to perform poorly. This is why the Global Partnership for Education according to an education research informational journal revealed certain important facts. In 2010, (GPE) granted Liberia a US \$40 million grant to aid in the country's implementation of its education sector plan. After 2, 489 schools were reopened following the Ebola epidemic, 189 classrooms and more than one million textbooks were supplied as part of the grant's efforts to build management capability and accountability in the education sector.

Partner organizations like USAID and UNICEF continue to invest heavily in the sector of education by providing teaching and learning materials to ensure good performance among students. (Neman 2014) claims that teenage pregnancies, abortions, HIV/AIDS infections, STI transmissions, and deaths were the main causes of student dropout. As a result, there were numerous social, health, and academic issues, low educational achievement, and school dropouts. Teenagers' premarital sexual activity is likewise high and growing, according to several studies from sub-Saharan Africa (Ochieng 2013).

According to Collay (2016), there is a teacher shortage as well as a lack of teaching and learning resources, all of which have an impact on student achievement. His research also found that ineffective teachers in Tanzania who were undertrained, underqualified, and trained caused students to perform poorly. The variables impacting pupils' academic performance include large class numbers, teachers, responsibilities, a poor teaching and learning environment in the schools, a lack of adequate home support, and poverty.

Anyamene and Nwosu (2019) claim that adolescent mothers withdraw, and become anxious, defensive, and violent when they lack the ability and confidence to handle life's obstacles. They are also unable to establish stable relationships and have poor communication skills. They subsequently endure various psychological tortures, such as being sent out of school, being isolated from family and friends, and being rejected, which result in a negative self-concept and low exam performance in all nations, including Kenya.

In the Rangwe sub-county, the poor performance of students in KCSE has been a worrying trend (Rangwe sub-county Education Office 2019). This has been a concern for the students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. The results of KCSE of 2018, showed that 50% of the schools had a mean score of D in 2019, and 13 out of 21 schools had a mean score of D. This is the reason why the researcher carried out a study on counseling and academic performance of students in Rangwe sub-county, Homabay County, Kenya.

Statement of the problem

The importance of education cannot be underestimated in any country or region. It's for this reason that poor performance of students in some areas like the Rangwe sub-county should be a wake-up call to all stakeholders. The poor performance of form four candidates has been a concern for parents, teachers, religious leaders, and students in this region. Keeping quiet and pretending that everything is good and fine will not help in improving the academic performance of candidates, in this sub-county.

The closure of the school in the recent past due to covid-19 pandemic that hit the world over made the situation worse. Due to the lockdown introduced in the country, communication between teachers and students was out. A few teachers tried to arrange for tuition for 5 students. This did not work well as teachers needed payment for their services which many students could not afford due to the financial constraints occasioned by the Covid pandemic. Many students stopped studying and got engaged in manual jobs to get their daily bread. Others became stressed while others became depressed and needed somebody to listen to their stories. It is against this background that the researcher sought to find out the impact of counseling on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Rangwe-sub County.

Research Objectives

General Research Objective

The purpose of the study is to find out the impact of counseling on academic performance in public secondary schools in Rangwe Sub-County, Homa-Bay County, Kenya.

Specific Research Objectives

(i) To assess the role of counselors in promoting academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya.

- (ii) To determine the attitude of students towards counseling in public secondary schools in Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya.
- (iii) To identify the challenges facing counseling programs in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya.
- (iv) To assess the factors influencing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya.

Research Questions

- (i) What role do counselors play in promoting academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Kenya?
- (ii) What attitude do students have towards counseling in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Kenya?
- (iii) What challenges face counseling in public secondary schools in Rangwe sub-county, Kenya?
- (iv) What are the factors influencing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Kenya?

Significance of the study

The study intends to investigate the impact of counseling on academic performance. This is very useful feedback for curriculum planners. It would shed light on the role of the counselor in students' performance in public secondary schools. This study would also create awareness of the challenges students face that might hinder their academic performance. The project would also raise awareness about the importance of counseling in supporting students' progress through excellent time management, decision-making, and outstanding performance in public secondary schools.

The school administration, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, would benefit from having researched material that serves as the foundation for policy formulation regarding counselors' involvement or participation in the education of students, thus boosting the overall quality of education.

The importance of counseling in enhancing academic achievement would be recognized by school officials and teachers in general, and they would be encouraged to pursue professional training in the discipline. Students would also benefit from a favorable attitude toward counseling services to make sound judgments and be prepared to be responsible and productive citizens.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

Because private institutions would not be allowed to exchange confidential information, the study was only conducted at public secondary schools. However, every effort was made to make sure the sampling technique used was adequate to gather the information required to conclude. The researcher's chosen respondents are favored since they are the primary consumers of the researcher's concern.

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter mainly reviews literature related to and relevant to the current study. It presents global, regional, and local perspectives related to the planned study of counseling and the academic performance of students. The following is a critical examination of Albert Bandura's social learning theory. After that, a critical assessment of Carl Rogers' person-centered theory follows. This is followed by a review of viewpoints and results from empirical research that are relevant to the study and the research objectives.

Theoretical Review

Social Learning Theory

In 1986, Albert Bandura proposed the Social Learning Theory. It highlights that conduct is impacted by a combination of internal and external processes rather than being entirely determined by internal or external influences. The internal process of our events is based on earlier experiences and is controlled by the external environment and influences to result in the overt reactions observed by Feltham and Horton (2006). According to Bandura, verbal representation and an incomprehensible picture of the environment have an impact on a person's conduct. As a result, to solve problems, one can use both insight and foresight. Theoretically, modeling is a process that involves learning as well as observational learning.

As a result, Bandura's theory can be used by a counselor to apply behavior modification in the setting of educational institutions and psychological problems. It serves as the theoretical underpinning of the behavior modeling technique. Through modeling, a student might pick up skills like academic, social, and personal ones. The counselor must serve as an example for the pupil. Bandura argued that the modeling effect can be used to teach new behavior. Guided engagement and system desensitization can improve these processes.

Students who effectively apply the social learning theory will achieve their academic and professional objectives. This is because well-mentored students possess better professional identities are more confident are academically sound and emerge as better communication (Elman 2005) in counseling trained to help professionals hold private in-depth discussions to promote their fruitful decision-making regarding their challenges.

The advantage of using Albert Bandura's theory is that it enables the clients to express the feeling they have the good that already exists with themselves either through verbalization of feeling or behavior. The client is allowed to see the goal and choose their careers and counseling play a supportive role This theory is suitable to be applied because it enables them to become more aware and realistic about their abilities and limitation. Despite its weakness, the study finds it helpful to use it and be able to apply it to the study because it will affect positive behavior among the students in school. It will help them improve their academic performance. It will help them reduce deviant behavior.

Studies have revealed that creating a rich environment with a variety of models for teenagers to observe and retain the behavior in their memory helps to shape their behavior. This theory will help counselors or teachers shape their behavior, be disciplined, and be able to pass their exams in Rangwe–Sub County.

Person-Centered Theory

The person-centered theory was created in the 1940s by American psychologist Carl Rodgers. This notion is predicated on Rodgers' conviction that every person aspires to and is capable of realizing their potential. It encourages people to find their solutions to their issues. The ability of the individual is emphasized heavily in the person-centered theory. This theory holds that people may be trusted and can achieve self-actualization. When the proper condition is in place. This theory gives the right relationship with a therapist. It creates the ability to master oneself, decreases esteem, and gives one the ability to express personal feelings and opinions and lose feelings of guilt over past mistakes. It is scientific since it is researched utilizing both theory and experience. It underlines the value of our surroundings, especially role models. It explains how we pick up other habits as well, such as hostility.

For clients who are educated, the self-centered theory strategy is more advantageous. The method exudes an unduly optimistic image of people and conveys the idea that everyone is capable of change. The hypothesis is predicated on the idea that every person has a variety of self-perceived views and beliefs. Additionally, it is predicated on the idea that one's experiences in life have an impact on who they are as a person. The theory applies to this study since the researcher believes that students need to increase their self-worth and have positive feelings about themselves and their studies. Moreover, Carl Rogers suggests regard to changes in states of mind and behavior through self-acceptance. Challenges in life will make them more are of themselves their actions attitudes, behavior feelings, and be more careful (Kassymova, et al., 2018).

Review of Related Studies

The literature on factors influencing students' academic success in public secondary schools, counselors' contributions to academic achievement in such schools, and students' perceptions of counseling in such institutions is reviewed in this chapter. In Africa, East Africa, and Kenya, the researcher has evaluated material from a worldwide perspective.

The Role of Counselors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

To fill a knowledge vacuum on teachers' perceptions of the work of the school counselor, Brunk conducted the research. This study's research design was qualitative in nature. Only 74 teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools were included in the sample for the academic years 2015–2016. Survey data were employed in the study as part of this qualitative investigation. The survey's findings showed that teachers had a statistically significant favorable opinion of the school counselor's job.

Another study was carried out by Egemen Hanimogle (2020) to investigate counseling in Turkey. The research involved a qualitative survey conducted among secondary school counselors in Adana, Turkey. The main objective was to determine the perception of school counselors regarding the current state of school programs in Adana and whether there is a need for improvement in this area. The data was collected through a qualitative survey among 20 counselors selected from different schools within the Adana region in Turkey. From the findings, it was evident that school counselors in Turkey did not have significant supportive infrastructure from the government. There was a general agreement that counseling contributes to an improvement of the mental state of learners and increases their willingness to undertake learning activities with positive attitudes. It was also established through this study

that counseling provides a supportive environment for students to make the right decisions when joining tertiary institutions. This led to the conclusion that counselors are important contributors to the learning needs of students in secondary institutions in a similar manner as other categories of teachers.

To identify a step that may be made to enhance counseling in public secondary schools, the research looked at the status and difficulties of counseling programs in Kiambu County's public secondary schools. The theoretical foundation of the student was founded on social exchange theory. The study used a descriptive research methodology and had as its population 2,347 students from 15 public secondary schools in Ndewa Division, Kiambu County, as well as 15 principals, 15 deputy principals, and 15 HODs. Eight out of fifteen pupils were chosen via proportionate sampling. 8 administrators, 8 deputy principals, and 8 HOD counselors from each of the sampled schools were chosen through the use of purposeful sampling, whereas 240 students were chosen using simple random sampling.

The attitude of students towards counseling in public secondary schools

Devises (2017) researched the perception of high school counselors' roles. The purpose of this study was to explain the perception of high school counselors regarding their role in counseling students. This study was a case study that involved in-depth interviews at Tennessee State University was asked to share practices, policies, and resources to promote students going to colleges and the student's attitudes towards counseling. The participants included those who had served for a minimum of 3 years as counselors in the Tennessee counseling department. The participants responded that family is a key element that determines the behavior of students. The study also focused on the fact that high school counselors may have ambiguous roles that complicate their efforts to deliver counseling services to students (Sdberg & Gilbert, 2014). The study found that counselors were asked to provide mental health services rather than completing their academic work.

In the Pollisa District of eastern Uganda, Nyan (2014) conducted a study to determine the students' and teachers' views about counseling services. The purpose of the study was to determine how instructors' and students' impressions of the counseling services provided in the district's secondary schools related to one another. A cross-sectional survey design including 30 teachers and 255 students chosen from 10 schools served as the study's only qualitative and quantitative framework.

The secondary schools in the Pollisa District were chosen using a straightforward random process. A self-administered questionnaire was then used to collect data from both teachers and pupils. Florence Githuthu conducted a study in 2019. This study evaluated the use of counseling services by students in secondary schools in the Karen Subzone, the Anseba Region, and Eritrea. The study used a mixed-methods research methodology with 1515 respondents as its target group. Data collecting techniques included systematic sampling, simple random selection, and purposeful sampling. Utilizing descriptive statistical methods that included frequency, percentages, and means, questionnaire data was examined. A mixed methods research design was employed in the study. It was directed at pupils, academic staff, guidance counselors, and principals. Five schools, 1,500 children, 100 instructors, five teacher's counselors, and five head teachers made up the target population. Students and teachers both participated in quantitative research, as opposed to teacher's counselors and head teachers. The researcher used

both probability and non-probability sampling strategies to select the respondent. The information was coded and analyzed to help with finding solutions. This was done by using descriptive statistics.

Challenges facing counseling in public secondary schools

Sakiz and Sarah (2018) carried out a study on the challenges in school counseling in Turkey. This study sought to fill a gap in the literature by researching school counseling systems. It also sought to look at how counseling is conceptualized and used in nations with developed counseling systems. Teachers, counselor educators, and counselors participated in surveys and interviews. as a paradigm for conducting research. This study used a mixed-methods approach. The study employed mixed-methods research.

Khanda (2018) also researched the difficulties counselors face in Indian secondary schools. School pupils are in the stage of adolescence, which is characterized by confusion over roles, conflict, and anxiety, the researcher observed. The goal of the study was to examine the difficulties experienced by teacher counselors at secondary schools in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, a smart city. Participants in the study, which used a descriptive survey approach, included principals and teachers' counselors from the city of Bhubaneswar, where counseling was offered. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in frequencies and percentages. According to the poll, teachers' counselors face a variety of challenges, such as a lack of funding, time constraints, professional training and experience, intense work demands, and parental and administrative support.

To ascertain teachers' perspectives on the variables influencing the provision of counseling services in the Namibian region of Ohangwena, Mowes (2016) conducted a study. This research project had a quantitative approach. Additionally, a non-experimental design including a survey was implemented. Teachers and counselors from all senior secondary schools in the Ohangwena region made up the study population. A representative sample of twenty-six (26) teacher counselors provided the data. The teachers' counselors were purposefully sampled, and descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the data using SPSS, a statistical software for the social sciences. According to this study, a lack of facilities and resources was a major barrier to the effective implementation of counseling services in schools.

Factors influencing academic performance in public secondary schools

In a study on communication skills development, academic performance, and school dropouts in the United States of America, Ford (2016) explored the link between socioeconomic status (SES) and academic achievement. Ford is from the State University of New Jersey. to properly analyze the connection between social-economic circumstances and academic programs The Bureau's American Community Survey 5-year estimates were used to collect the data. We utilized household income and family poverty.

The attendance rate and subject-matter proficiency were used to measure academic outcomes. A table of R-squared values and linear regression analysis were utilized to establish whether social and economic factors affected the outcome. Low social and economic standing does not always affect academic success, according to the research. It wouldn't be accurate to assert that a student's academic performance is much impacted by their socioeconomic status. Instead, other family dynamics and psychological elements are crucial to academic success. For the total

development of an individual, their communities, and the country, education is crucial. It is crucial to do well academically and achieve good grades to gain educational certifications and increase one's skills and abilities.

Kapie (2018) conducted a study on the elements affecting secondary school students' academic performance in India. According to the study, several factors both within and outside of schools might have an impact on a student's academic success. According to the research, the factors that affect learning in schools primarily include the teacher's professional skills and abilities, the availability of library facilities, laboratories, and instructional strategies that are appropriate for teaching-learning processes as well as effective interpersonal communication between individuals.

The study also discovered that tests, homework assignments, and classes are all considered forms of speech that gauge students' comprehension as well as teachers' use of instructional strategies. The study found that the student's family's level of poverty, the availability of teachers' counseling, the occurrence of conflicts, and the needs and requirements of other family members are additional factors that affect their academic performance. The study also showed that to succeed academically, a student must be committed and sincere toward them, their home environment must be calm and friendly, and teachers must have an approachable demeanor and employ teaching-learning processes and instruction strategies in helpful members.

The study was conducted at the women's college Alzahra. Aquino, Dr. Doan Hongle, and Dr. Nguyen Perfector visited Oman. Research on student performance on accomplishment tests and its implications for management planning was conducted in the year 2020. In a few Asian schools, the study looked at how well kids performed on math, science, and English accomplishment assessments.

The study used the descriptive methodology, and a sample size of 248 students ($n=248$) from chosen institutions was determined. The prior performance of students' accomplishment exams in English and mathematics, as well as their relationships to various dependent factors such as type of instruction and gender, were investigated using an expert facts research design. To determine and put the performance of a select group of students to the test in connection to factors like type of instruction and gender, the researcher used a quantitative research study.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework, such as the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, is a symbolic representation of many forms of relationships between various types of research variables (Tidwell, 2012). The conceptual framework displays a flow of arrows that demonstrate the relationships between the variables. The inference is that when students are properly motivated (impact), the result anticipated of them (output) is advancement in their academic work. This enables the researcher to easily determine how counseling and academic success are related.

The conceptual framework explains graphically the main things to be studied, counseling, the role of counselors, the attitude of students towards counseling, factors influencing counseling, and challenges in counseling. The intervening variables are; the age of the students, religious beliefs, career aspirations, and discipline. All these lead to academic performance which is graded as poor, average, or good in the end.

Independent Variable

- Counseling
- Role of counselors
- Challenges in counseling
- Attitude in counseling

Dependent Variable

- Academic performance
- Poor
 - Average
 - Good

Intervening Variable

- Age
- Religion beliefs
- Career aspiration
- Discipline

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gap

The reviewed literature illustrated that counselors have an important role to play in public secondary schools. They have a role to help the students to have a positive attitude towards counseling, study well, and excel in their examinations. The cited literature recommended further strategies to be explored by counselors to assist students in performing well in their examinations. The reviewed literature revealed that counseling programs are going on in many countries in the world. Counseling services are being offered in Kenya but they are not yielding much. These include career counseling and psychological and emotional problems among others.

The literature review on the impact of counseling on the academic performance of students was done in other parts of the county and regions whose strategic approach is different from that of Rangwe Sub-County. None of the studies focused on how these apply in the case of Rangwe Sub-County. It is evident, therefore, that literature gaps exist on the impact of counseling on the academic performance of students in Rangwe Sub-County. These studies, therefore, sought to fill this gap by focusing on the impact of counseling on the academic performance of public secondary schools in Rangwe Sub-County.

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design, study area, study population, sampling, procedure, sample size, data collection instruments, pilot testing, data quality control, validity and reliability of instruments, trustworthiness and credibility of data tools, data collection procedures, as well as ethical considerations.

Research design

This study used mixed method research design qualitative and quantitative research methods are to be used to obtain results that other research questions. This is in recognition of the recommendation of Field (2009) and

Sakinda (2009) who consider the mixed method as an appropriate, method with high validity. It also enhanced more insight into the research problem and question under study (Creswell, 20212).

Descriptive survey design involves data collection using self-administered questionnaires to a sample of the students. This design has been supported by Connie (2008), who attests that it is used to gather information concerning the status of a phenomenon The approach helped the researcher learn more about how counseling affects kids' academic achievement in the Rangwe sub-county.

Study Area

The study is to be conducted in Rangwe Sub County in Homabay County. This is a Sub County that borders Kisii County in the East and Nyando Sub County in the North. It is found around the Lake Victoria region. Many of the schools in the region are public schools and have qualified teachers posted by the Teachers' Service Commission. The evidence of poor academic performance among the students in national examinations is the reason for choosing it as a research site. There is a lapse in counseling programs in addressing the personal and academic challenges facing students in schools.

Study Population

The study's target population was students and teachers of public secondary schools from Rangwe Sub County, Homabay County. Statistics from the Ministry of Education showed poor performance among the students in form four. The study, therefore, focused on the Rangwe sub-county for this research.

Table 1. Table Showing the Population Distribution of Schools

School type	No of schools
A. Girls boarding secondary schools	8
B. Boys boarding secondary schools	3
C. Mixed boarding secondary schools	4
D. Mixed-day secondary schools	7
Total	21

There are 21 public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county based on the information from the education office.

Table 2. Gender Distribution of Students

Students	No of students
Male	11,800
Female	13,200
Total	25,000

There are 11,800 male students and 13,200 female students in the sub-county under investigation.

Sample and sampling techniques

Sample population and sampling methods are to be used in this study. Sampling is the process of selecting several individuals for the research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The chosen individuals represented the group or the entire population to determine the sample size, a formula was used. Three criteria were used to base the decision: the desired level of confidence, the expected prevalence of the relevant variable, and an acceptable margin of error. A mathematical formula created by Taro Yamane in 1967 to determine the size of a sample can be used to calculate the necessary sample size (Israel, 1992; Mora & Kloet, 2010).

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2} \text{ Where;}$$

N sample size required

N= number of people in the population

e= allowable error (%)

$$n = \frac{25000}{1 + 25000 \times 0.00255} = 394$$

According to the survey, there were 25,000 pupils overall, both male and female. The confidence level was maintained at 96% while the degree of precision was held at 5%. The sample size for the students involved in the study was.

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2}$$

N= number of people in the population =25,000

Table 3. Sample Distribution Of Students

Schools	Students
A. 7 Girls boarding secondary	125
B. 3 Boys Boarding secondary schools	53
C. 3 mixed boarding schools	89
D. Mixed-day secondary schools	107
Total	394

According to Yamane's calculation, 374 students made up the study's sample size. Simple random sampling will choose 125 students from girl schools, 53 students from boy schools, 89 students for mixed boarding, and 107 students from mixed day. The number of students per school was determined by proportionate sampling.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire, according to Babbies (2013), is a document with questions and other elements intended to collect data suitable for analysis. The researcher was able to get sample frequency from the respondents thanks to the

questionnaires. The researcher got in contact with the respondents and submitted to them the questions. The researcher used open-ended and close-ended questions.

Data Collection Instruments

A questionnaire was employed by the researcher to conduct the investigation. The delivery of two sets of questionnaires one for students and one for teachers—was the primary method used to gather data. Each tool was designed to gather particular data from the responders who were the intended audience. The questionnaire for students aimed at getting information on their level of awareness about the counseling program, their attitude towards counseling, and the challenges facing counseling. The teachers' questionnaire sought information on the influence of counseling on academic performance.

Pilot Testing

The instruments were tested in schools within the Sub-County; the schools that were selected for pilot testing did take part in the field study. The pilot study helps in rectifying any mistakes if the instruments are valid and reliable. A pilot study is conducted to evaluate the flexibility, and duration to improve upon the study design before the performance of a full-scale research project. The researcher selected a few participants (students and teachers in this case) to try to check whether the procedure needed fine-tuning this saved time and money.

Data Quality Control

Data quality control was making sure that data usage and collection procedures were done correctly and accurately.

Reliability and Validity of Instruments

The degree to which the instruments produce the same results over numerous trials is referred to as reliability (Orodha, 2005). The degree to which the data gathered and the outcomes of the analysis accurately reflect the phenomena being studied determines how genuine an instrument is. Two methods were used to validate the researcher's instruments. First, the researcher went over the instruments with the objectives to make sure that the information available allowed them to respond to the objectives. The researcher also consulted the opinion experts from the departments of counseling psychology.

Trustworthiness and Credibility of Data Tools

Three schools in the Sub-County participated in a study, and the respondents were used in the final analysis. The researcher was able to fine-tune the procedure and accuracy of the data to be obtained. The researcher conducted a study in three schools using the (10%-20%) sample size for descriptive research. Six teachers and 40 forms four students would be involved in the pilot study. The items or data collected would be processed, collected, and analyzed with the aid of a computer program statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis Procedure

The research was based on an extrusive collection of data and reducing them to a management summary. It took into consideration the research problem, the study objectives, and the research questions once the data was collected, they were complied with, verified, ordered, classified, interpreted, and coded in the SPSS program.

The researcher prepared a codebase, set the data structure to enter the data, and screened them for errors. The researcher then explored the relationship between the variables. Data analysis was done through the use of descriptive statistics, was used. The elements that the researcher got from the qualitative method were used to connect with the objectives of the study.

Summary

This chapter has shown the research methodology that the researcher used in the study. The chapter includes sample size and sampling techniques and the rationale for using the data collection instruments. Piloting of the study has been discussed as well. The following chapter discusses the results of data analysis, interpretation, and debate regarding the effects of counseling on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county.

Data analysis and presentations

Questionnaires and interview schedules would be reviewed for accuracy, organized, and summoned after the data-gathering process. SPSS version 10 for Windows was then used to code the data (Kasomo, 2007, Ogula 2002). Tables, percentages, frequencies, and means were used to tabulate the results of the quantitative data coded from the open-ended and closed-ended questions. Themes were used to transform qualitative data from open-ended questions and interview schedules.

Ethical considerations

The researcher observed ethical issues before, during, and after the study. He followed the required protocol, by obtaining an authorization permit from the Ministry of High Education (MOE) county director of education, and the county commissioner. The researcher would ensure that he has the required documents needed to carry out the research. The document was produced when required by the relevant parties. The researcher visited the schools by carrying official identification documents to carry out the research.

The research gave a detailed explanation of the purpose of the study which is counseling and academic performance of students in Rangwe Sub-County. The researcher maintained a healthy relationship with the participants, and the stakeholders and assured the respondent of confidentiality. The research had presumptions or assumptions about the study. On the contrary, the researcher learned from the respondents with an open mind.

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter contains research-based study findings. The demographic data is shown after the response return rate. Presenting descriptive findings and inferential statistics from the responses of both students and teachers, the study's findings are provided.

Response Rates

The study sampled 391 student respondents and 31 teacher respondents from public secondary schools in Rangwe Sub County of Homa Bay County, Kenya. Respondents were administered questionnaires.

Table 4. Response Rate

Questionnaires		Students	Teachers
1	No. distributed	394	35
2	No. returned	391	31
3	No. of unreachable respondents	3	4
4	Percentage Response	99.24%	88.57%

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Analysis of Findings from Secondary School Students

The respondents were provided with a research instrument having a list of possible answers about counseling and academic performance in public secondary schools. they were asked to rate their level of agreement on the various factors that relate to counseling and academic performance in public secondary schools. The questionnaires had both open and closed-ended questions.

Demographic Information of Students

The researcher gathered background and demographic data from the study participants to better grasp their perspectives on the study's goals. This comprised the study participant's gender, age, school type, and school category. The results of the study are reported in Table 5.

Table 5. Demographic Information of Students

Statements	Responses	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
What is your gender?	Male	137	35.0	35.0
	Female	254	65.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
What is your age?	13-15 years	53	13.6	13.6
	16-18 years	265	67.8	81.3
	19-21 years	74	19.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
What type of school are you studying at?	Boys only day	4	1.0	1.0
	Girls only day	16	4.1	5.1
	Mixed day	92	23.5	28.6
	Boys boarding	28	7.2	35.8

Category of school	Girls Boarding	133	34.0	69.8
	Mixed boarding	118	30.2	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
	National	76	19.4	19.4
	County	268	68.5	88.0
	Sub County	47	12.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Role of Counsellors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The first study objective sought to find out the role of counselors in promoting academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was investigated through various parameters as presented in the table below (Table 6).

Table 6. Role of Counsellors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Statements	Responses	Valid Percent	Cumulative through Percent	Frequency
Do you have counseling services in your school?	Yes	378	96.6	96.6
	No	13	3.4	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
Who is the teacher in charge of the counseling department in your school (Fill in only one of the answers)	Know the teacher	370	94.6	94.6
	Don does not know the teacher	13	3.3	98.0
	Cannot remember the teacher's name	8	2.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
If you had a problem or an issue, would you want to go see a teacher counselor (tick)	Yes	299	76.5	76.5
	I am well sure	16	4.1	80.6
	No	70	17.9	98.5
	No other comment	6	1.5	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Attitude of Students towards Counselling in Public Secondary Schools

The second objective sought to determine the attitude of students towards counseling in public secondary schools in the Rangwe Sub-County, Homa Bay County, Kenya. The objective is meant to help in determining parameters that influence students' attitudes towards seeking counseling services while in school. These were analyzed and presented as shown in table 7.

Table 7. Attitude of Students towards Counselling in Public Secondary Schools

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
When choosing subject combinations	Yes	295	75.4	75.4
	No	96	24.6	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
To develop good study habits	Yes	295	75.4	75.4
	No	96	24.6	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
To adjust and cope with school life	Yes	337	86.2	86.2
	No	54	12.8	99.0
	Total	391	100.0	
When a student is stressed or depressed	Yes	238	60.9	61.0
	No	153	37.1	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
In matters concerning the relationship	Yes	35	9.1	9.1
	No	355	90.9	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Challenges Facing Counselling Programs in Public Secondary Schools

The third study objective investigated the challenges facing counseling programs in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was investigated through various parameters as is shown in table 8.

Table 8. Challenges Facing Counselling Programs in Public Secondary Schools

Statements	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
If the teacher counselor is absent, who would you go to for help and why?	Counselling Teacher	284	72.6	72.6
	Other guidance and counseling teachers	107	26.9	99.5
	Total	391	100.0	
Have you ever sought counseling services from the Department of counseling?	Yes	272	69.6	69.6
	No	119	27.6	97.2
	Total	391	100.0	
	Once	64	16.4	16.4
How many times	Twice	64	16.4	32.7
	Multiple times	157	40.2	72.9
	N/A	106	27.1	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
What are the issues/problems that make you seek these services?	Anxiety	258	66.0	66.0
	Drug abuse	126	32.2	98.2
	Grief and loss	3	.8	99.0
	Anger	4	1.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
Did you feel comfortable discovering your problem / with the teacher counselor?	Yes	310	79.3	79.7
	No	81	20.7	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
Do counseling programs in your school involve students and teachers?	Yes	360	92.1	92.1
	No	22	5.6	97.7
	I do not think so	6	1.5	99.2
	Make any comment	3	.8	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

In the Rangwe sub-county of Homa Bay County, Kenya, the fourth study goal looked into the variables affecting students' academic achievement in secondary public schools. Several indications were used to study this. The results are provided in Table 9 as follows.

Table 9. Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Statements	Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
In your opinion does the student teacher have a positive attitude towards counseling services offered in the school?	Yes	346	88.5	88.5
	No	45	11.5	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
Has the department had any positive influence on the academic performance of the students?	Yes	336	85.9	85.9
	No	55	12.3	98.2
	Total	391	100.0	
How can you rate your level of academic performance after counseling services were offered to you?	Very poor	14	3.6	3.6
	Poor	25	6.4	10.0
	Good	190	48.6	58.6
	Average	127	32.5	91.0
	Very good	35	9.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
What are the factors affecting your academic performance in school?	Anxiety	67	17.1	17.1
	Poor method of study	152	38.9	56.0
	Poor reading/study labor	84	21.5	77.5
	Lack of facilities/resources	61	15.6	93.1
	Laxity among teachers	13	3.3	96.4
	Others specify	10	2.6	99.0
	All the above	4	1.0	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
	Corporation and dedication among teachers	67	17.1	17.1

What are the factors that have promoted academic performance in this school?	Availability of facility resources	80	20.5	37.6
	Involvement in counseling services	65	16.6	54.2
	Determination and dedication of teachers	31	7.9	62.1
	Discipline	50	12.8	74.9
	Support of parents and other stakeholders	2	.5	75.4
	All the above	96	24.6	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
	Has the department had any productive influence on the academic performance of the school	Yes	332	84.9
	No	59	15.1	100.0
	Total	391	99.7	
What are the challenges facing counseling programs in the school?	Lack of Professional Development	290	74.2	74.2
	Poor Parental Support	96	24.6	98.7
	Lack of Resources	3	.8	99.5
	Work Pressure	2	.5	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	
In your opinion how can those challenges be overcome?	Professional Development	280	71.6	71.6
	Parental Support	105	26.9	98.5
	Reducing Work Pressure	4	1.0	99.5
	Availability of Resources	1	.3	99.7
	Creating Time	1	.3	100.0
	Total	391	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Analysis for Secondary School Teachers

This section presents the analysis of findings from teacher respondents from public secondary schools in Rangwe Sun County, and Homabay County. They were provided with a research instrument having a list of possible

answers about counseling and academic performance in public secondary schools. they were asked to rate their level of agreement on the various factors that relate to counseling and academic performance in public secondary schools. The questionnaires had both open and closed-ended questions.

Demographic Information of Students

The researcher captured demographic information of the study respondents in a bid to understand their profile about the study objectives. This included the gender, age, years of teaching and academic qualification of the study participants. Study findings are presented as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Demographic Information of Teachers

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	21	67.7	67.7
	Female	10	32.3	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
Age	Age 20-30 years	18	58.1	58.1
	31-40 years	6	19.4	77.4
	Above 40 years	7	22.6	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
Years of Teaching	1-5 years	16	51.6	51.6
	6-10 years	9	29.0	80.6
	16-20 years	1	3.2	83.9
	Above 20 years	5	16.1	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
Academic Qualifications	Diploma/s/	8	25.8	25.8
	Graduates(Bachelor)	23	74.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Role of Counsellors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The first objective of this study aimed at finding out the role of counselors in promoting academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was investigated through various parameters as presented in the table below (Table 11).

Table 11. Role of Counsellors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Is counseling offered in your school?	Yes	31	100.0	100.0
	No	0	0	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
If yes is the department functional?	Yes	26	83.9	83.9
	No	5	16.1	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
The services offered in the department of counseling in the school	Orientation services	4	12.9	12.9
	Placement of follow-up service	3	9.7	22.6
	Education of counseling services	14	45.2	67.7
	All the above	10	32.3	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Attitude of Students towards Counselling in Public Secondary Schools

The second objective aimed to determine the attitude of students towards counseling and how this affects performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. The findings of the study were analyzed and presented as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Attitude of Students towards Counselling in Public Secondary Schools

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Has the department had any influence on the academic performance of the students?	Yes	30	96.8	96.8
	No	1	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
How do you rate the academic performance of the student who has been offered counseling services?	Poor	1	3.2	3.2
	Good	24	77.4	80.6
	Excellent	6	19.4	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	

Challenges Facing Counselling Programs in Public Secondary Schools

The third objective aimed at investigating the challenges facing counseling programs and academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was investigated through various parameters as is shown in table 13.

Table 13. Challenges To Counselling Programs and Poor Performance

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Contributing factors to poor academic performance	Anxiety	9	29.0	29.0
	Poor method/study	13	41.9	71.0
	Lack of teacher resources	7	22.6	93.5
	Laziness	1	3.2	96.8
	Other(specify)	1	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
Factors that have promoted academic performance in the school	Cooperation of dedication among teachers	13	41.9	41.9
	Availability of facility and resources	6	19.4	61.3
	Involvement in counseling services	1	3.2	64.5
	Determination of dedication of teachers	5	16.1	80.6
	All the above	6	19.4	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
Has the department had any positive influence on the academic performance of the school?	Yes	29	93.5	93.5
	No	2	6.5	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The fourth objective aimed at investigating the factors influencing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in the Rangwe sub-county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. This was investigated through various indicators. The findings are presented as shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Influencers on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
What are the challenges facing counseling programs in the school?	Lack of resources & Lack Of Time	24	77.4	77.4
	No challenges	6	19.4	96.8
	Work pressure	1	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	
In your opinion how can these challenges be overcome?	Availing Resources & Creating Time,	24	77.4	77.4
	No opinion	7	22.6	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	

SOURCE: Field Data 2022

Statistical Tests

Making quantitative judgments about a process or processes is made possible by a statistical test (Kaur, Kumar, 2015). The goal is to decide whether there is sufficient data to "reject" a theory or hypothesis on the process. The null hypothesis is the hypothesis in question.

Correlation Analysis

The strength of the linear link between two ranking or numerical variables is expressed in terms of a correlation coefficient.

The Pearson correlation analysis was done to ascertain the relationship between the study variables. A correlation coefficient (r) value between 0.1 and 0.29 is regarded as poor, one between 0.3 and 0.49 as moderate, and one between 0.5 and 1.0 as strong.

The table below shows that counseling services had the highest positive correlation with academic performance at schools ($r = 0.512$), student attitudes toward counseling had the next-highest positive correlation with academic performance at schools ($r = 0.361$), challenges with counseling had the next-highest positive correlation with academic performance at schools ($r = 0.387$), and other factors affecting counseling sessions had the least but still positive correlation with academic performance at schools.

Table 15. Summary of Correlations Statistics of Independent and Dependent Variables

	Counseling Services	Attitude Of Students Towards Counseling	challenges facing counseling	Other Factors Affecting Counselling Sessions	Schools' Academic Performance
Counseling Services	1				
Attitude Of Students Towards Counseling	0.284	1			
Challenges Facing Counseling	0.354	0.421	1		
Other Factors Affecting Counselling Sessions	0.379	0.387	0.412	1	
schools' academic performance	0.512	0.361	0.387	0.341	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SOURCE: Survey Data (2022)

Multiple Regression Analysis

The broad objective of the study was to find out the impact of counseling on academic performance in public secondary schools in Rangwe Sub-County, Homa-Bay County, Kenya.

To achieve this objective, three specific objectives (counseling services, the attitude of students towards counseling, challenges facing counseling, and other factors affecting counseling sessions) and four corresponding questions were identified and formulated respectively.

Table 16. Overall Effect on School Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	2.216	.607		13.571	.000
1	Counseling Services	.312	.020	.243	3.347	.001
	The Attitude of Students Towards Counseling	.431	.086	.428	5.582	.000
	Challenges Facing Counseling	.406	.070	.467	6.136	.000

Other Factors Affecting Counselling Sessions. .397 .057 .471 4.521 .001

R 0.459
R Square 0.211
Adjusted R Square 0.205
F 19.137
Sig 0.000

a. Dependent variable: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

b. Predictors: (constant), Counselling Services, Attitude Of Students Towards Counseling, Challenges Facing Counseling, and Other Factors Affecting Counselling Sessions.

Régression Equation

$$Y = 2.216 + .312X_1 + .431X_2 + .406X_3 + .397X_4 + e$$

The regression equation above implies that, at a constant of 2.216, the change of unit in the counseling services causes an increase of 31.2% in the school performance, while the change of unit in the attitude of students towards counseling causes an increase of 43.1% in the school performance. Moreover, a change in the challenges facing the counseling unit causes an increase of 40.6% in the school performance, and lastly, a change in the unit of other factors affecting counseling sessions an increase of 40.6% in the school performance.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Role of Counsellors in Promoting Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

The conclusions made in this article are by the study's goals and are based on the study's findings. Based on the results for goal one, the study concluded that students are more likely to use counseling services when they are aware of them. This is aided by the availability of teachers who offer counseling services in public secondary schools. The counseling departments are functional, and this is determined by specific functions such as giving pieces of advice, reassurance, communication, release of emotional tension, clarifying thinking, and reorientation.

Attitude of Students towards Counselling in Public Secondary Schools

According to the results of goal two, students' attitudes about counseling in public secondary schools are crucial for encouraging their academic pursuits. Through counseling services, students can be able to overcome problems they experience and actively take part in key decision-making. Good counseling contributes to students' ease in choosing subject combinations as well as developing good study habits. The students who sought counseling services can manage to have better academic performance.

Challenges Facing Counselling Programs in Public Secondary Schools

Based on the results for objective three, the study concluded that there are indeed challenges facing counseling programs in public secondary schools. These challenges comprise anxiety which was the main issue why students

could seek counseling services followed by drug abuse, anger and grief, and loss. The various contributing factors to poor academic performance are somehow related to counseling services. They include poor study methods and anxiety, lack of teacher resources, availability of facilities and resources, and determination of dedication of teachers.

Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools

Lastly, the findings for objective four, the study concluded that there are other factors affecting students' academic performance in public schools. These comprise a poor method of study, poor reading habits, anxiety and lack of facilities, laxity among teachers, availability of facility resources, cooperation, and dedication among teachers, and involvement of counseling services. However, to promote counseling services that translate to good school performance, there is a need for schools to avail resources, create time, and professional training, reduce work pressure, and parental support and support from the administration.

Recommendation

- (1) To promote the behavior of students seeking counseling services, there is a need for the schools to create awareness across the schools. It is only when students are aware of the counseling services that they can seek it.
- (2) To improve the attitude of students towards counseling services, the study recommends that teachers should work towards building a good teacher-student relationship. This can help students to always open up and seek counseling services.
- (3) The school's administration ought to work closely with the counseling teachers as well as students to identify and address all possible challenges that most cases hinder students from seeking counseling services while in school.
- (4) The study recommends that public secondary school administrations need to be proactive in determining the other factors that tend to influence students' behavior toward seeking counseling services. This can help them to mitigate or address such factors.

Suggestions for Future Research

The study makes the following recommendations for future research:

- There is a need to research the influence of students' behavioral traits on the utilization of counseling services in public secondary schools.

Declarations

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Authors have declared no competing interests.

Consent for Publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this research work.

Author's Contribution

All the authors took part in data collection and manuscript writing equally.

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